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SENIORS IN LOWER-MAINLAND AT HIGH RISK, SAYS DIX

VICTORIA— The fact that nearly eleven per cent of long-term care facilities in the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser health regions are most likely to violate government health and safety regulations, reveals the supports that are supposed to help seniors is failing, says Adrian Dix, NDP Opposition Health Critic.

“Health services for seniors have been eroded under the Campbell Liberals. B.C. now has the lowest standard of care of anywhere in Western Canada for long-term care and we are seeing the results of this government’s failure to adequately resource acute and long-term care.”

In the legislature yesterday, Dix listed off several facilities run by Retirement Concepts that the health minister knew had serious concerns related to seniors care, including Nanaimo Seniors Village, Beacon Hill Villa, Coquitlam, Maple Ridge, Williams Lake, Summerland.

“There is no accountability, no disclosure to B.C. families about which facilities are risks. The problem is the Minister of Health isn’t doing his job in informing seniors. He isn’t doing his job in protecting seniors, said Dix

“Why doesn’t he take our advice and establish an independent officer for seniors’ issues, a representative so that seniors have a place to go and someone who will follow up on their complaints and not bury them?”

The New Democrats have been raising seniors concerns in the legislature, calling for better accountability to the public and for the creation of a seniors’ representative who can investigate concerns independent of health authorities and private operators.

Home and community care nurses in Kelowna have also voiced their concerns about a concerning “dilution of care” that is “putting lives at risk”.

“The interior has a large number of seniors counting on this government to provide good, safe standards of care, but this is not a situation isolated one area. Seniors from every corner of British Columbia are suffering from lack of resources, lack of government accountability. When does this government admit that enough is enough?”

The NDP Opposition is calling on the Campbell Liberals to investigate Retirement Concepts after a litany of serious care issues have emerged at several facilities around the province.

– 30 –

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